

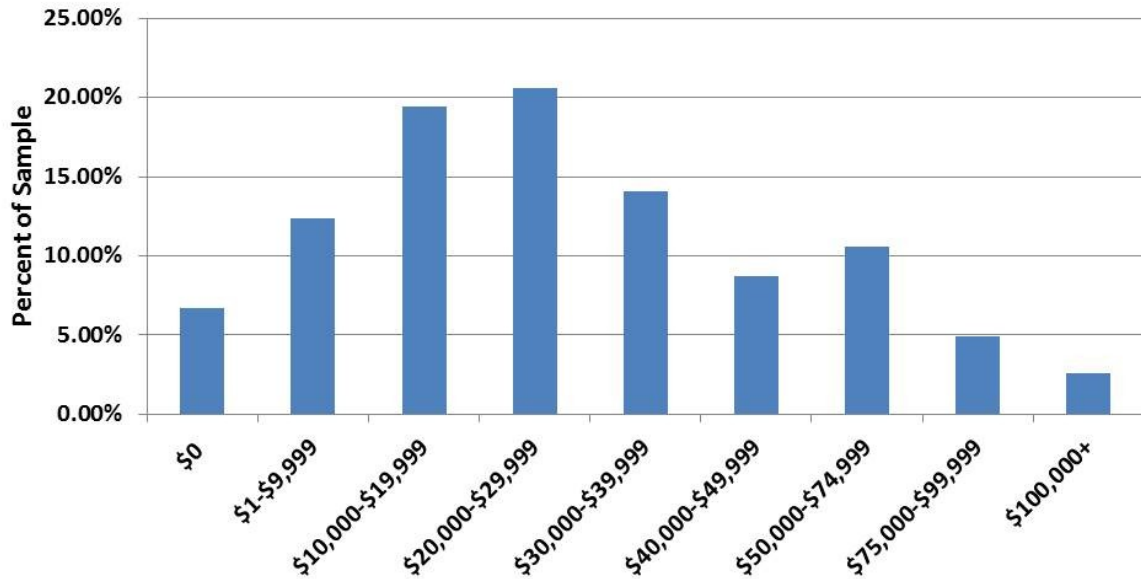
On why I think the furry fandom shouldn't be seen as something just for the rich (Or: why, as a furry, you don't need to (and shouldn't) use AI, even if you're poor!): An attempt to show that it's not wealth what matters in the fandom, despite what you might think.

In the context of AI "art" defenders, the argument that "AI democratizes art" (or similar statements) has been prominent. Now, this argument has been addressed so many times before, so there's no need to mention how it's wrong. (I might add that the situation varied across time and space, and I'm not sure if research has been done on how accessible art was, for example, in the pre-industrial era.) Also, I plan to write more against AI in the future.

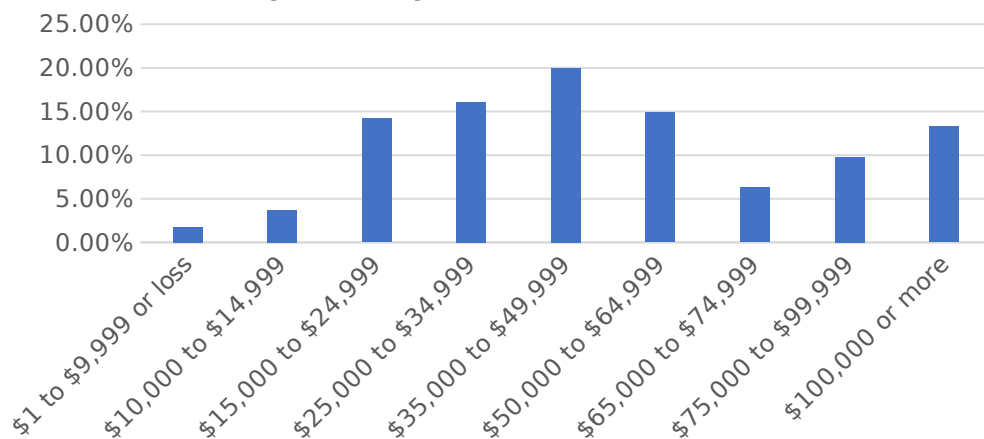
Some supporters of AI "art" may claim artists are "privileged", and in my opinion it could either be bait/trolling, a belief that art is expensive to learn, or that artists earn more and they are jealous. Now, this is related to the furry fandom because of the "suspiciously wealthy furry" stereotype. And I believe this might contribute to some anti-furry sentiment.

According to Furscience, the income of furries (sample from Anthrocon 2015) is not that different from the average American's, however the data is not clear, as the original source is not what's linked. (\$31,772 vs \$31,470, respectively) For comparison, if imperfect, see this. While it seems at first that furries are actually on average surprisingly *poorer*, I might have miscalculated or used incorrect data. (1) (2).

Annual Income of Anthrocon Sample



EARNINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2015 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS) (American Community Survey)



Either way, I personally believe that because the U.S. is a developed country, there is still bias, and furries from developing countries may be wealthier than

the average for their countries, especially because the internet has been associated with the fandom since the beginning (and yes, there is truth to the furries work in IT/the military stereotype, too).

If someone is still skeptical, from personal observation, it seems that you don't even need a fursuit or commission (or even make) art to be a furry. However, it's not as simple as this in practice.

Now, the thing is that these furries are the ones you don't see as often on social media. It's obvious why.

Now, if you're a kid who doesn't know how the real world works, or ~~you're a spoiled brat~~ you don't have the maturity for it: one thing I want you to understand is that all the amazing things the fandom creates don't come out of thin air: it took a lot of effort and money to create practically everything you saw and loved created before around 2022, and still for a lot of what you see after that (hopefully). Behind that animated short were the animators, the voice actors, the composers, and many others, who spent hours or days drawing the storyboard, then every frame (assuming just 1 minute, 20 fps, and that every frame is unique, 1200 times drawing and coloring. 3D animation is not really different in that it takes a lot of effort, for instance, you need rigging, etc.). Even the AI you're using takes a lot of energy, access to the Internet and a powerful enough computer (if it's a local model). And where does that energy come from? You figure it out. And also, the effects on the environment. The point is that making art is not different from any other job, and there's no reason why it shouldn't be treated as such. Even as a hobby, it's not as if you can summon pencils, brushes, paint, electricity for your drawing tablet and computer, etc. out of thin air.

Now, don't be alienated by those folks. I get you envy them, but in general (but not always), you have more in common with them than the millionaires who make your life harder, think about how they make their money. Also, there's a reason furries donate a lot to charity.

Even if that does not convince you, think of them as role models: they themselves will likely be the ones who could lift you and perhaps your community out of poverty! Just like they did, if you do the work, that is. I'd personally favor someone like a furry Bruce Springsteen. Exploring working-class themes, but being rich. Let the suspiciously wealthy furries show the poor that apart from wealth they're not that different from them.

Nobody is actually forcing you to show off wealth, but unfortunately that's how you get noticed. Show off your skills on anything, doesn't matter what. If you get bullied because you can't afford a fursuit, you can work hard for it! But you don't even need one!

What I'd do: personally live frugal for some time in an attempt to sympathize. Offer cheap commissions, maybe free art occasionally, and/or recommend other artists willing to do it cheaply or for free. (This does not mean stop making more expensive art) Instead of a fursuit, maybe just something like a

cheap mask even. A self-imposed limit or budget for all furry stuff. All of that while not being overt about the wealth and contributing to charity and other causes, not hoarding it. Even then, encourage others to get rich, the rich furries will pay you just for doing what you (hopefully will) like! That's the point!

Basically, all of this is proof that while showing off wealth might seem an element, it's not what defines being a furry. In my opinion, from what I've seen, could be wrong, it's very unfortunate that this discourse over wealth and status within the fandom has only been of importance following the rise of AI generated images.

Now, on AI. While you might be frustrated by the prices of commissions, there were always cheaper options if you couldn't even draw a simple doodle: edited/collaged stock images, free to use bases and templates, or even a brief textual description (What you would use as a prompt). Ignore (but don't steal, unless you want to get in trouble) those expensive YCHs or PFP comms/whatever you want. Maybe ask a friend to doodle it for free even. Some artists will share their art under a free license such as Creative Commons; you will (usually, but not always) be able to repost and remix it with no problems. I believe these should also be used more frequently. See if you can convince more furries to use them.

Still, I repeat: you need to appreciate all of the effort that goes into all the artwork itself! Think of the work it takes! Even for small doodles, the artist knows exactly what they're doing, and what for, unlike with AI. Some furry profile pictures could be free to use, but be careful, and check with the artist/customer for the piece and if they have issues with someone else using it.

Now, the dark truth about AI.

With AI, you're essentially cutting off all authentic human connections, and therefore, you're devaluing all art as a form of expression. Even if it might seem a human wrote it, there is nothing underneath, no depth, no substance, nothing. It's just an imitation that at first might seem like it, but in reality, it's just that, a poor imitation. This has nothing to do with wealth and everything to do with what makes us human. You don't understand the point. The goal is to destroy what makes us human.

If you believe in conspiracy theories, some believe that this is to intentionally further prevent us from forming actual bonds, and making us easier to control. Please look at subreddits such as [r/ArtistHate](#), [r/AntiAI](#), and others, and keep doing your research. The sooner you get out of it, the better.

I plan to actually talk about it in depth on some other document regardless. However, while all the arguments have been repeated, I plan to explain every argument to the folks who are either misinformed, poor, or who don't care, and how this affects them.

- (1) <https://furscience.com/research-findings/appendix-1-previous-research/anthrocon-2015/>
- (2) U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). EARNINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2015 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS) . American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S2001. Retrieved January 3, 2026, from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2015.S2001?q=Income+and+Earnings&y=2015>.